

(2) *Standards.* The Board will not apply any state inheritance law requirement that an action to establish paternity must have been commenced within a specific time period, measured from the employee's death or the child's birth, or that an action to establish paternity must have been commenced or completed before the employee's death. If state laws on inheritance require a court to determine paternity, the Board will not require such a determination, but the Board will decide paternity using the standard of proof that the state court would apply as the basis for making such a determination.

(3) *Employee is living.* If the employee is living, the Board will apply the state law where the employee is domiciled which was in effect when the annuity may first be increased under the social security overall minimum (see part 229 of this chapter). If under a version of state law in effect at that time, a person does not qualify as a child of the employee, the Board will look to all versions of state law in effect from when the employee's annuity may first have been increased until the Board makes a final decision, and will apply the version of state law most favorable to the employee.

(4) *Employee is deceased.* The Board will apply the state law where the employee was domiciled when he or she died. The Board will apply the version of state law in effect at the time of the final decision on the application for benefits. If under that version of state law the claimant does not qualify as the child of the employee, the Board will apply the state law in effect when the employee died, or any version of state law in effect from the month of potential entitlement to benefits until a final determination on the application. The Board will apply the version most beneficial to the claimant. The following rules determine the law in effect as of the employee's death:

(i) Any law enacted after the employee's death, if that law would have retroactive application to the employee's date of death, will apply; or

(ii) Any law that supersedes a law declared unconstitutional, that was considered constitutional on the employee's date of death, will apply.

4. A new paragraph (c) is added to § 222.33 to read as follows:

**§ 222.33 Relationship resulting from legal adoption.**

\* \* \* \* \*

(c) The adoption laws of the state or foreign country where the adoption took place, not the state inheritance laws, will determine whether the claimant is the employee's adopted child.

Dated: November 29, 1999.

By Authority of the Board.

Beatrice Ezerski,

Secretary to the Board.

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**FEDERAL MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION**

**29 CFR Part 2700**

**Procedural Rules**

**AGENCY:** Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking; extension of comment period.

**SUMMARY:** The Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission is extending the comment period for a notice of proposed rulemaking published on November 10, 1999 (64 FR 61236-39). On November 10, 1999, the Commission proposed to amend its procedural rules by adding a new rule setting forth settlement procedures which are intended to facilitate and promote the pre-hearing settlement of contested cases that come before the Commission. The new procedures would be instituted as a pilot program for a two-year trial period. In response to a request by the Department of Labor's Office of the Solicitor, the Commission is extending the comment period for 30 days.

**DATES:** Comments must be received in writing on or before January 10, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be submitted to Norman M. Gleichman, General Counsel, Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, 1730 K Street, NW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20006. For the convenience of persons who will be reviewing the comments, it is requested that commenters provide an original and three copies of their comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Norman M. Gleichman, General Counsel, 202-653-5610 (202-653-2673 for TDD relay). These are not toll-free numbers. Dated: December 1, 1999.

Mary Lu Jordan,

Chairman.

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Minerals Management Service**

**30 CFR Part 280**

**RIN 1010-AC48**

**Prospecting for Minerals Other Than Oil, Gas, and Sulphur in the Outer Continental Shelf**

**AGENCY:** Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

**SUMMARY:** This proposed rule specifies how to conduct Geological and Geophysical (G&G) prospecting and research for minerals other than oil, gas, and sulphur in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) under a permit; requires everyone conducting G&G scientific research in the OCS without a permit to file a notice with us; informs small operators of environmental laws and regulations for safe and sound practices; and rewrites the proposed rule in plain English. These revisions respond to changes in technology and practice.

**DATES:** We will consider all comments we receive by February 7, 2000. We will begin reviewing comments then and may not fully consider comments we receive after February 7, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** If you wish to comment, you may mail or hand-carry comments (three copies) to the Department of the Interior; Minerals Management Service; Mail Stop 4024; 381 Elden Street; Herndon, Virginia 20170-4817; Attention: Rules Processing Team. The Rules Processing Team's e-mail address is: [rules.comments@MMS.gov](mailto:rules.comments@MMS.gov).

Mail or hand-carry comments with respect to the information collection burden of the proposed rule to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs; Office of Management and Budget; Attention: Desk Officer for the Department of the Interior (OMB control number 1010-0072); 725 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20503.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Keith Meekins, Resource Evaluation Division, at (703) 787-1517.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) (43 U.S.C. 1331 *et seq.*) is the basis for our regulations to administer G&G prospecting and scientific research activities in the OCS. Section 11(a) of the OCSLA provides authority for the Secretary of the Interior to allow any person to conduct G&G explorations in the OCS if the explorations:

(1) Do not interfere with or endanger operations under a lease covered by the OCSLA; and